By Ed Somers

In a press conference held at the National Press Club in Washington (DC) on September 20, the U.S. Conference of Mayors called on Congress to reach a budget agreement to avoid arbitrary sequestration cuts amounting to over $100 billion in 2013 to both domestic investment and national defense programs. Led by Conference of Mayors President Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter, the press conference saw the release of a bipartisan letter signed by 131 mayors calling on Congress, "to adopt a bipartisan and balanced approach to deficit reduction by incorporating spending cuts with additional revenue from sources such as tax code.

See SEQUESTRATION on page 4
Washington, DC
September 27, 2012

In Dallas Texas this week, mayors and Workforce Directors came together to discuss the jobs issue. It is clear after this meeting that the big challenge for America is that there are thousands of jobs out there but we do not have the skilled workers to do the work that the jobs require.

This issue of “we have jobs” from the business community and “we don’t have the people with the skills to do the jobs” continues to reverberate in many cities across the nation.

What we learned is that Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings and his workforce team are leading the way in bringing the public workforce team together with the Dallas Metro area business community to provide the skilled workers to fill the jobs with the people as they become taxpaying citizens in meaningful and productive employment.

Mayors were inspired by the best practices presented during the Dallas Forum, sponsored by Siemens, and this discussion is most important as we go forward to develop a 2012 jobs agenda.

The discussion at the Dallas Forum this week with the mayors is a continued awakening that we must engage the business community, large and small, to continue to produce jobs by the thousands and recover from the greatest recession since the Great Depression that started with ’08 meltdown.

As U.S.Mayor goes to press, The United States Conference of Mayors will raise our bipartisan flag in Denver October 2.

We join with Denver Mayor Michael Hancock on the eve of the Presidential Debate, devoted to domestic policy, to challenge the media and both the Democratic and Republican Presidential candidates to focus on the real domestic city issues that mayors face each day.

Specifically, we are asking the Presidential candidates and the media to focus on the economy and jobs, jobs, jobs.

There are four areas we will put on the table for domestic policy discussion and recommendations. Today’s mayors know that jobs will come from infrastructure investments, exports, education reform and recognizing that training is essential to narrow the current enormous skills gap.

Let us hope that the first domestic agenda 2012 Presidential Debate on October 3 will go beyond the shallow policy discussions we have had as all mayors want the Candidates to move forward toward more specific recommendations.

We continue to hear about global competition; we need to bring the discussion more to the main street discussion and take note of how USA mayors are working with their business community in our metro areas to produce job growth.

I have said over and over that when the history of the recovery of the greatest recession since the Great Depression is written, it will prove and show it was the USA mayors working with the American business community at the local level who deserve the credit for the job growth we have had for continuous months.

Again, Mayor Mike Rawlings and the Metro Dallas Business Community have shown us this week that growth will happen if all mayors work their business community in partnership with education institutions to produce the skilled workers we need at this time. No doubt, mayors and their workforce staff teams left Dallas with renewed energy and all energized with an agenda and specific recommendations to push forward, front and center to the next President and Cabinet during the Presidential transition and first 100 days of the next Administration.
By Indianapolis Mayor Gregory A. Ballard, USCM Mayors Professional Sports Alliance Chair

As the mayor of a city with a large professional sports presence, you learn quickly that being the home to professional sports franchises, teams and facilities present both opportunities and challenges. Nothing brings this closer to home than the recent news that the National Hockey League owners locked out their players in conjunction with the expiration of their collective bargaining agreement September 15.

The reality is that the relationship between professional sports entities and cities is a long-term one, which must be sustainable for teams, players, facilities and cities. And of course, it is crucial that we protect our taxpayers’ investments as well as the prospects of our local sports hospitality workers whose income and ability to support their families can be directly affected by the status of a contract. And certainly, we all appreciate the impact of professional sports on small businesses and employment in our cities as well.

As such, I believe there has to be a better way to bring sports and tourism and their related dollars to our cities without the uncertainty of third-party contractual negotiations or asymmetric information when negotiating stadium contracts.

Why Major League Sports Matter

This is something we struggle with in Indianapolis — we have NFL and NBA franchises as well as a triple-A MLB team. And others do, too. I'm certain there is a better way to share information and work with other stakeholders at the table.

To address these and other issues, I spearheaded the formation of The U.S. Conference of Mayors Mayors Professional Sports Alliance. The alliance is composed of mayors of cities with existing professional sports teams or professional sports infrastructure such as stadiums, or mayors of cities wishing to explore the possibility of involvement with professional sports events.

Frankly, it was a long-time coming. Players and owners already have coalitions designed to represent their needs and provide collaborative space. The cities should as well. The purpose of the Mayors Professional Sports Alliance (MPSA) is to share amongst our mayors better information, resources and support on issues related to professional sports, and to work effectively with leagues, players and owners.

MPSA provides an opportunity for affected cities to pool data and better understand the science and best practices of professional sports contracting, and other key issues. The alliance helps frame our relationships to our sports teams for what they are — long-term affiliations — and it leads us towards developing best practices through information sharing amongst MPSA mayors.

As members of the Conference of Mayors, we already know that we learn best when we talk to each other. MPSA now provides a means by which we can share information and deal with common problems in the area of professional sports.

Ultimately, this is a resource designed to protect and maximize our cities’ relationships with sports franchises and players; each of who already have their own organizations. In fact, the NFL has already recognized benefit of having a structure like this. MPSA provides a single-point-of-contact for programmatic communications with pro-sports teams on issues such as youth development or anti-obesity campaigns.

As such, our alliance recently partnered with New York University’s Preston Robert Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Sports Management to help address these issues and begin to create a network and working database for affected member cities.

The Tisch Center has already begun populating the database with important documents and information relevant to arena and facility leases, incentives and financing agreements and provisions, which will be made available to relevant alliance membership. Other key research projects are under development as well, all aimed at better arming our mayors with the best information possible regarding professional sports.

The MPSA is quickly picking up traction as an important entity in professional sports. For example, on September 6, I participated in the Bloomberg’s Sports News Summit in New York City, serving on the stadium financing panel. And just this past week, Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings and Arlington Mayor Robert Cluck led a discussion on stadium security issues at a Conference of Mayors meeting in Dallas.

Gallup Reports Increase in Public’s Trust of Local, State Government

The Gallup organization’s annual governance survey, conducted earlier this month, shows an increase in the American public’s trust in both local and state governments, with the largest group of respondents — 74 percent — expressing a great deal or fair amount of trust in government at the local level, and 63 percent expressing their trust in state government. Gallup says the public’s trust in local government has been more stable over time, and thus appears to be affected less by state or national political and economic factors than trust in state government.

Trust in state government, which had fallen to as low as 51 percent in 2009, has now essentially returned to levels seen before the financial crisis.

This year’s level of public trust in local government is up from 68 percent in last year’s survey. The highest level of trust in local government — expressed by 80 percent of Americans surveyed — was recorded by Gallup in 1999.

“Americans are in a better mood about conditions in the U.S. now than at any time during the last three years,” Gallup reports. “And while their level of satisfaction and confidence in the economy remain below historical norms, their trust in state and local government is as high as it has been in the last decade.”
SEQUESTRATION
from page 1

reform and closing unfair corporate tax loopholes.”

The entire letter and list of signatories is available at usmayors.org.

The letter was developed in partnership between Nutter, Conference of Mayors Vice President Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, Conference of Mayors Defense Conversion Task Force Chair Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, and Conference of Mayors Metro Economies Chair Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer.

As stated in the letter, “These automatic across-the-board cuts in defense and non-defense programs are estimated to reduce the nation’s GDP by $215 billion, decrease personal workforce earnings by $109.4 billion and cost well over two million jobs in only the first year.”

Along with Nutter, participating in the press conference were Conference of Mayors Second Vice President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak, Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, and Columbia (SC) Mayor Stephen Benjamin.

The mayors used the press conference to explain the local impact that sequestration cuts would have on their communities and residents.

Nutter said, “The federal budget can be balanced in three ways – more defense cuts, more non-defense cuts and more revenues. We believe that all three are necessary. Right now, the sequestration includes only cuts – but cities have already borne more than their share of cuts to non-defense programs, like the COPS Program. We recognize that further cuts may be necessary. However, we will oppose any budget-balancing proposal that does not include all three of these areas, including new sources of revenue.”

Nutter added, “We need Congress to adopt a budget plan that protects the working class, the middle class, and military families.”

Johnson stressed that, “The impending sequestration process is perhaps one of the biggest threats to our metro economies… which represent over 90 percent of our nation’s GDP, wage and salary income in this country, over 86 percent of the nation’s employment, and will represent 90 percent of future economic growth.”

Speaking to the impact on education, Johnson said, “You are talking about a cut of $1.3 billion in programs that help our disadvantaged children, including special education which will be cut over $1 billion.”

Speaking to the risks to Atlanta, Reed said, “The $100 million Atlanta streetcar we are building, which has put hundreds of people to work – as we were asked to do by the federal government – would be at risk of a cut.”

Becker said the cuts are “…not a number to us, they are our residents, they are our business, they are our infrastructure, and they are the services we provide throughout our communities.” Becker also emphasized the willingness of mayors to work with Congress, the business community and others to help reach a balanced deficit reduction agreement.

“As U.S. Mayor went to press, 160 mayors had signed the letter. Per the direction of Conference of Mayors President Michael Nutter, the letter is staying open and mayors who still wish to sign should contact Ed Somers at esomers@usmayors.org.

We are not going to stand by in cities across the United States of America and allow the federal government to shift its responsibilities to us…”

– Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed

160 Mayors Have Signed – Others Can Still Join

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Cuts to public health would mean that the city would clean 100 fewer homes for lead-reducing services to as many as 300 lead-poisoned children.”

– USCM President Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter

Phoenix Mayor Stanton’s Statement

Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, Chair of the U.S. Conference of Mayors’ Defense Transition Task Force, released a statement on the day of the press conference saying, “We as mayors have fought against Congress’ inability to act, to spare our country from spiraling into another recession, and we’ll continue to stand up for the hard-working people in our cities. Washington needs to realize that its stubbornness and inability to compromise will have astronomical effects on our economies – two million more people will be put out of work, and half of those work in the defense industry. We must move forward with smart economic policies and reject sequestration to continue the growth we have seen in Phoenix and cities throughout the nation.”

Rybak said, “This is the wrong time to send a negative economic jolt into the economy, and it is absolutely past time for Congress to get its work done.”

Benjamin pointed out that Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base, McEntire Joint National Guard base represent $7.1 billion in economic impact on his metropolitan area, and the sequestration cuts would amount to a 15,000 job loss and $600 million wage loss across South Carolina.

Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran spoke to the fact that both Democratic and Republican mayors signed the letter that calls for new revenues to help reach a balanced agreement, and commended mayors for helping lead the country out of the great recession.

The issue of sequestration, as well as expiring tax cuts, will be front and center when the House returns to work for a lame duck session the week of November 12.

Los Angeles Mayor
Villaraigosa’s Statement

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa issued this statement following the release of a bipartisan letter from The U.S. Conference of Mayors to Congressional leadership, urging them to adopt a bipartisan and balanced approach to deficit reduction that will steer away from the fiscal cliff:

“Mayors across the country put purpose before partisanship. We collaborate, forge consensus, and create coalitions. In short, we are governing. Now it’s Congress’ turn.

“The draconian, indiscriminate, and across-the-board budget cuts scheduled to take place in January would devastate both domestic investments and national defense programs.

“One-third of the threatened deep cuts in domestic spending are aimed at state and local programs: 36 percent to education; 28 percent to housing and community development; 18 percent to health and the environment; ten percent to workforce; and five percent to public safety and disaster response. That means dramatic job losses for our teachers, our first responders, and our health care workers. Losses our metro economies cannot afford.

“It is imperative that Congress stop playing politics and get serious. Congress needs to tackle deficit reduction in the way Americans want them to: by striking a balance between cuts and new revenues.

“The threat of a national default can no longer be used as a negotiation tactic. Congress must reach a comprehensive, balanced deficit reduction agreement that facilitates long-term economic growth.”

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Mayors Highlight Workforce Training Successes, Partnering with Business Community and Federal Government to Continue Private-Sector Job Growth

By Megan Cardiff

The Conference of Mayors Leadership, Conference of Mayors Workforce Development Council members, and private-sector leaders came together in Dallas on September 24, for the 2012 Fall Leadership Meeting, sponsored by Siemens. Participants discussed ways in which cities can expand their local workforce system and create good-paying jobs. Conference of Mayors President Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter presided over the meeting, which was hosted by Work and Opportunity Task Force Chair Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings.

"U.S. cities require a highly skilled, trained workforce that can compete globally" said Nutter. "It is critical, as leaders of these cities, to do our best to ensure that our citizens are globally competitive and have the means to obtain skills that will lead to careers and a better life for them and their families."

Conference of Mayors Jobs, Education, and the Workforce Standing Committee Vice Chair West Sacramento Mayor Christopher Cabaldon and Associate Vice President of Network Engagement and Growth for the National Academy Foundation Bill Taylor kicked off the meeting. Cabaldon and Taylor discussed Career Academies and highlighted the importance of mayoral leadership in integrating college and career curricula into high schools. Both emphasized the importance of public/private partnerships.

"Every student should graduate from high school ready for college and career," said Cabaldon, adding, "We want education to be relevant so that students feel it come alive. Mayors can play in this domain at the policy level and provide leadership at the district level. We, as mayors, have to be the connectors and translators between business and the workforce."

Taylor described the extensive work the National Academy Foundation does to make sure youth are prepared for college and career success through the organization’s proven educational model, which includes industry-focused curricula, work-based learning experiences, and business partner expertise.

"Every child is capable of high academic rigor and career ability – it’s our job to make that available. We can’t afford not to take this approach in the way we are educating our youth in the K-12 system."

Another important best practice in workforce development focused on at the meeting is the development of public/private partnerships with higher education. Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx was joined by Siemens Technical Training Manager Pam Hawza, Dean of the Harris Campus at Central Piedmont Community College Mary Vickers-Koch, and Charlotte Works CEO Steve Partridge to present the city’s successes in partnering a major corporation with a community college and a local workforce board to train individuals for jobs.

"There is a real danger for all of us in training people just to train them. We have to make sure the jobs people are being trained for actually exist," stated Foxx.

The panel presented the successful partnership between Charlotte, Siemens Industry, Piedmont Community College and Charlotte Works when Siemens’ expanded the city’s facility – needing 750 additional workers in just two years. "Only when you see the skill sets of the citizens in your city can you see where the gaps are that need to be filled. We know where the jobs are coming from in Charlotte," said Partridge.

In line with the topic of public/private partnerships in higher education, Rawlings, President of Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas Laurie Bouillion Larrea, and Chancellor of the University of North Texas System Lee Jackson talked about...
the successful partnership in their city.

“We have got to do what employers need us to do in the community – it’s employer driven. If we don’t engage people and make them excited about important careers in STEM, we’re lost. We have got to make them excited about STEM careers,” stated Larrea.

In the final hours of the meeting, participants heard from business leaders regarding the talent development pipeline and the future workforce needs of private sector industries. President and CEO of Siemens Industry Daryl Dulaney discussed the resurgence of the manufacturing industry in the U.S., with the peak period being predicted as between 2015 and 2020.

“The American worker is three times as productive as the average overseas worker,” said Dulaney. “Efficiency and productivity are not enough. We have a significant skills gap when we go to hire people and bring them into our business.” Workforce development is critical if we really want to take advantage of this predicted manufacturing boost.

Senior Vice President of Talent Development and Chief Diversity Officer at AT&T Debbie Storey spoke on the company’s work to help close the nation’s skills gap and improve education in the country. “We are investing in this country — investing in America means investing in jobs as well. We struggle to fill candidates in many areas because of lack of skills and workforce readiness.”

Storey stressed that the issue of individuals lacking the technical skills to hold jobs is not just an AT&T or manufacturing and technology issue, but an issue in every industry and every business. She pointed out that today’s increased need for well-developed technological skills is one of the big challenges facing business and the workforce system when it comes to closing the skills gap.

President of the Bank of America Charitable Foundation Kerry Sullivan spoke to participants on the current work and future plans of the organization to help disconnected youth, hard-to-serve populations, and the chronically unemployed and underemployed. Sullivan announced that the Foundation will be announcing a workforce grant by early October that will help to increase the organization’s workforce efforts across the nation.

At left, USCM Workforce Development Council President and Full Employment Council, Inc. CEO Clyde McQueen with National Academy Foundation Associate Vice President of Network Engagement and Growth Bill Taylor.

USCM Past President Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth B. Kautz discusses the importance of mayors and business leaders working together on job creation and training. Kautz is also Co-Chair of the USCM Small Business and Franchising Task Force.

At right, Siemens Industry, Inc. President and CEO Daryl Dulaney leads discussion on Employers and Workforce Readiness panel at the Fall Leadership Meeting in Dallas highlighting Siemens’ talent development pipeline and future workforce needs, with USCM President Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter, left.

Corporations need to hear from you and where your gaps are — we have an army of people who want to make a difference. The workforce system can be a major player with Bank of America through validating all you’ve done,” Sullivan stated.

Nutter and fellow Conference of Mayors leadership held a press conference to stress the importance of improving local job growth and preparing the future workforce as the economy continues to recover. The mayors also discussed the recently released Conference of Mayors report prepared by HIS Global Insight identifying specific sectors of the economy expected to have the highest and fastest job growth.

“U.S. cities require a highly skilled, trained workforce that can compete globally,” said Nutter. “There is nothing more important than building successful programs that support the individuals in our communities to develop skills for the jobs of the future, and enable personal and professional growth.”
THANK YOU
In appreciation for your sponsorship of

The U.S. Conference of Mayors

Fall Leadership Meeting
Developing Next Generation Leadership in Cities Through Workforce Development

SIEMENS

Left to right, Siemens Director of State and Local Government Affairs Tom Phillips, Siemens Area Manager Craig Banaszewski, Siemens General Manager Houston Michael Hadrick, USCM Vice President of Mayors Mesa Mayor Scott Smith, USCM President Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter, USCM Advisory Board Member Fall Leadership Meeting Host Dallas Mayor Michael S. Rawlins, USCM Second Vice President Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, Siemens Energy Technical Training Manager Pam Howze, Siemens City Account Manager Chad Nobles, and USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran.

Senior Vice President of Talent Development and Chief Diversity Officer at AT&T Debbie Storey

Siemens Training Manager Pamela Howze participates on the Best Practices in Workforce Development: Public/Private Partnerships with Higher Education Panel at the Fall Leadership Meeting in Dallas.

Siemens Area Manager Craig Banaszewski briefed USCM leadership mayors on security and logistical processes at the the world famous Dallas Cowboys stadium.
By Laura DeKoven Waxman

The Chicago City Council on September 12 approved Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s Welcoming City Ordinance, which is intended to make Chicago the most immigrant-friendly city in the country. Emanuel proposed the ordinance July 10 to provide basic protections to undocumented Chicagoans who have not been convicted of a serious crime and are not wanted on a criminal warrant. The city worked with immigrant rights advocates in the development of the ordinance.

“This Welcoming City ordinance will make Chicago a national leader in welcoming those who play by the rules, contribute to our economy and help make Chicago the incredible city that was envisioned by its first immigrant settlers,” Emanuel commented after the city council’s action. “This ordinance will prevent law-abiding Chicagoans from being unfairly detained and deported, and will ensure that Chicago is a welcoming, multicultural global city where people have access to services they need to contribute to our city.”

The report also analyzed job projections for 15 major metro areas. Among these metros, Phoenix-Mesa will see a 14.2 percent payroll growth over the five-year period. Charlotte is forecast to experience 13.8 percent job growth, followed by Laredo at 13.7 percent and Dallas-Fort Worth at 12.8 percent.

Over the period, professional and business services will be the top contributor to job growth in 13 of the 15 metro areas.

The report can be found online at usmayors.org

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Economy to Add 11.5 Million Jobs in Next Five Years

By Dave Gatton

The U.S. economy is projected to add nearly 11.5 million jobs over the next five years, according to The U.S. Conference of Mayors and IHS Global Insight. In a report released at its September 24 Dallas Fall leadership meeting, the mayors expect jobs to grow 8.6 percent through 2017, adding to the mounting evidence that the economy will continue to add jobs well into the future.

“This report shows that the economy will continue to produce jobs, despite the political gridlock in Washington,” said Conference of Mayors President Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter. “Mayors are working with their business community to help sustain the recovery, but we still need Congress to do its job to make the recovery stronger.”

The professional and business services sector is forecast to lead growth, adding 3.69 million jobs over the next five years, with most of the growth coming from expansions in the admin/support subsector.

Other major job contributors will include the education and health services sector, projected to add 2.08 million jobs through 2017, and the construction, natural resources and mining sector, also slated to add 2.08 million jobs.

Future growth in the manufacturing sector will come from expansions in durable goods, up 11.8 percent.

Although the federal government is expected to drop jobs in the future (9.1 percent), state and local government will expand jobs for the next five years by 3.2 percent.

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Chicago City Council Adopts Mayor Emanuel's Welcoming City Ordinance, Protects Law-abiding Undocumented Immigrants

By Laura DeKoven Waxman

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Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, at podium, during a July 10 press conference at which he proposed Chicago’s Welcoming Ordinance.
Every municipality in the United States is eligible to nominate one new or substantial addition to an existing public garden, edible garden or green space development within their communities. All garden and green space projects initiated by the city government are eligible, including those projects developed and implemented in conjunction with community garden groups and other relevant community partners.

Five grants will be awarded to the winning cities each in the amount of $25,000 ($15,000 cash; $10,000 in-kind product). Projects should address the following priorities:

1. Engage area residents, including local young people/students.
2. Be transformational in scope;
3. Serve as a focal point/visible project for the city;
4. Impact the lives of its residents; and
5. Serve as an essential element of the city’s sustainability plan.

All application submissions must include a letter of support from the mayor.

Go to the GRO1000 webpage: www.usmayors.org/gro1000 for application guidelines, information about 2012 winners, and GRO1000 2013 application link.

APPLICATIONS WILL BE SUBMITTED ONLINE
Deadline is FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26

For more information, contact Jocelyn Bogen at jbogen@usmayors.org or 202-861-6727
Despite Separation from Village Voice Media, Backpage.com Continues to Accelerate Sexual Exploitation, McGinn Asserts

By Laura DeKoven Waxman

It was reported September 24 that Village Voice Media, which owns weekly newspapers in 13 cities, is separating from the online classified site Backpage.com, which individual mayors, the Conference of Mayors, and others have criticized for advertising adult escort services without requiring age verification to ensure that such services are not being provided by minors. A group of Village Voice’s managers have obtained at least some of the financing needed to buy the now-defunct organization from its current owners, leaving Backpage.com as a separate online classified advertising company.

Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn, who first brought his concern with Backpage.com to the attention of other mayors during the Conference of Mayors July 2011 Conference leadership meeting in Los Angeles, said during a September 26 press conference that he appreciated the decision by the Seattle Weekly and Village Voice Media’s other newspapers to disassociate from Backpage.com. “At the same time Backpage.com is still out there,” he commented. “They’re still advertising, they’re still accelerating sexual exploitation of minors, and I will continue working with other mayors and with our state leaders to figure out how we can address that, how we can get Backpage.com to stop as well.”

Led by McGinn, in May nearly 50 mayors sent a letter to Village Voice Media’s CEO urging him “to take steps to prevent the use of Backpage.com for underage sex trafficking by requiring in-person verification of any prospective escort advertiser’s ID, as well as proof of identity and age for anyone pictured in an escort ad.” No response to the letter was ever received.

McGinn sponsored a resolution adopted by the Conference of Mayors in June during the Orlando annual meeting, which called on Backpage.com and other classified services nationwide to implement in person age verification and end the sale of children through their services. It further called on Congress, state legislatures, and local elected bodies to pass legislation to address commercial advertising over the Internet for sexual abuse of minors.

Joining McGinn in the press conference was State Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles, who successfully sponsored such a bill in Washington State. Her legislation created a new crime of advertising commercial sexual abuse of a minor but permitting an affirmative defense if the defendant documents that it had verified the age of the person being depicted in ads. Backpage.com, however, has sued the state to block implementation of the new law.

“Unfortunately, though, that Backpage.com’s priority is its $21 million annual revenue in adult escort services ads over ensuring minors are not being sold for sex in such ads. By requiring age verification of those depicted in the ads, Backpage.com’s revenue would have a relatively small impact, but it would join other advertisers, such as Craig’s List and The Stranger, in standing against advertising commercial sexual abuse of a minor,” commented Kohl-Welles. She complimented Village Voice Media’s new owners “for doing the right thing,” however.

New York Government Agencies Now Able to Use U.S. Communities

Fifteen years ago, only 31 states allowed governmental entities to purchase goods and services through cooperative purchasing contracts. On August 1, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed a bill that modified the New York State procurement code to make cooperative purchasing contracts available to local government agencies within the Empire State.

All 50 states now allow local governmental entities to access savings, expanded product and service offerings, and operating efficiencies provided through cooperative purchasing programs like the U.S. Communities Cooperative Purchasing Alliance. To help cities, municipalities, and other public sector entities in New York State understand the benefits of cooperative purchasing, U.S. Communities is hosting webinars and attending conferences around the state.

U.S. Communities is the only purchasing cooperative founded by public agencies for public agencies. The five national sponsors that founded and co-own U.S. Communities include: The United States Conference of Mayors, the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and the Association of School Business Officials International. In addition, more than 90 state associations sponsor the U.S. Communities program.

Participating in a cooperative purchasing program is an established best practice in public procurement. Cooperative purchasing consolidates the buying power of government agencies and nonprofits nationally to provide benefits in pricing, product quality and contract efficiencies. Aggregating the purchasing power of public agencies can lower costs, increase services and save time.

Most purchasing cooperatives offer cost and time savings, which are critical to running procurement departments effectively and efficiently.

U.S. Communities supplier partners commit to providing their most competitive government pricing to all participating agencies. Regularly scheduled internal and third-party audits ensure compliance with contract pricing, terms and conditions, while benchmarking analyses evaluate the overall value. Supplier contracts are also reviewed quarterly by the lead contracting agency, and all documents relevant to contract solicitations are publicly posted on the U.S. Communities website for complete transparency.

With nearly 20 years of experience, a substantial customer base, and significant sales, U.S. Communities is in the best position to deliver contracts that offer the most competitive pricing. To ensure compliance with state guidelines, it adheres to a competitive bid solicitation process through a lead public agency and provides access to documentation to confirm compliance. Public agencies that implement stringent supplier commitments, audits and price benchmarking participate in U.S. Communities with confidence.

U.S. Communities has more than 50,000 registered participating public agencies and offers 22 contracts with 28 suppliers. In 2011, aggregate program volume exceeded $1.2 billion, with more than $200 million in estimated savings to participating public agencies. All contracts are non-exclusive, contain no minimum spending requirements and require no usage fees.

Learn more about U.S. Communities by visiting the website www.uscommunities.org or contact Kathryn Kretschmer-Weyland with the Conference of Mayors at 301-460-5251 or e-mail kweyland@usmayors.org.
2012 MWMA FALL SUMMIT:
Annual Solid Waste Symposium Focuses on Cost-Cutting, Safety, Operations Efficiency, Sustainability

By Jubi Headley

Cutting costs. Achieving environmental sustainability. Delivering services faster, better, and more safely. These were the themes explored as solid waste and environmental officials from cities and states across the country convened in Lexington for the 2012 Municipal Waste Management Association (MWMA) Fall Summit. The Fall Summit, held this year September 11 – 13 in Lexington (KY), brought public sector leaders together with private sector executives from the solid waste industry, to discuss trends, emerging technologies and best practices in contract negotiations, workplace safety, alternative fuel vehicles, and other solid waste issues.

The three-day annual conference featured a variety of sessions, all focused on achieving greater efficiency, cost-savings, and sustainability in the municipal solid waste sector. “For me, the MWMA Fall Summit is one of the most important conferences I attend all year,” said Tonja Brickhouse, Director of the Department of Solid Waste and Environmental Program Management for Tampa. “I always come away with concrete, creative strategies for improving my city’s solid waste services. And I get the opportunity to network one-on-one with my peers — other solid waste directors from cities around the country, who face the same issues I do in my job. I get lots of invitations to industry conferences, but the Fall Summit is always the first one I put on my annual calendar, and I’d recommend it to any city solid waste director.”

One of the conference’s most popular sessions, the “Urban Summit,” featured no formal presentations of any type. The Urban Summit, the one session that is a part of the Fall Summit each year, is a unique experience – more of a brainstorming and strategy session where public sector solid waste, recycling and environmental executives meet in a closed-door forum (no private sector participants or media are allowed), for a candid discussion on the topics most important to them. Participants can talk about whatever they’d like, whether it’s a problem that’s costing their city money, or an issue that they’ve been wrestling to solve. Urban Summit participants put their issues on the table, to the one group of people who completely understand their job and role in the city – and have likely dealt with the same or a similar issue themselves. Participants regularly comment that they leave the Urban Summit with a new idea, solution or program that saves them money.

Other topics covered at this year’s Fall Summit included:

• Negotiating the Ultimate Contract. The presenters have participated in solid waste and other contract negotiations for a variety of cities across the country, that combined are valued in the tens of billions of dollars. Presenters focused on the key ingredients for negotiating a contract that benefits the city and meets the vendor’s needs as well; the benefits and risks of various types of contracts; creative alternatives to conventional contract development processes; and a case study from Philadelphia that illustrates a number of contract negotiation best practices that could be adopted by other cities.

• Moving Toward Waste-to-Energy. Increasingly, mayors, municipal solid waste executives, and cities are focusing on waste-to-energy (WTE) as an option not only to divert waste from landfills, but to generate renewable energy. The session focused on the nuts and bolts of developing a waste-to-energy initiative – including which WTE technologies are proven and which are still in the development/testing stages, as well subsidies and other financing options for WTE. The session also featured presentations from two cities with WTE initiatives – Honolulu, Hi, which just completed a major expansion of its WTE facility, and Allentown (PA), which is in the early stages of launching its WTE initiative.

• Alternative Fuel Vehicles. Participants learned about the relative benefits of CNG (compressed natural gas) versus hybrid vehicles, as well as the typical operating costs of each type of truck, as well as other technologies on the horizon. This presentation was complemented by the presence of an actual truck at the conference site for demonstration purposes.

• Workplace Safety. Workplace safety is always one of the top concerns of municipal solid waste executives. This session featured a presentation on video equipment that can be installed in trucks, in order to identify and quickly correct driver error, and by doing so improve safety and reduce safety-related costs. Participants also got an up-close look at the latest ANSI-approved innovations in safety apparel.

• Operations Efficiency. This session featured a live demonstration of route management software that optimizes collection routes, as well as track collection stops, times and a host of other data.

• Dealing with Food and other Organic Waste. Seattle and Portland are widely considered within the solid waste industry to be the gold standard when it comes to municipal organics waste programs, and the solid waste chiefs of both cities were on hand to share best practices as well as challenges and other considerations that each city faced in the development of its organics waste diversion program.

“I got so much out of this year’s Fall Summit,” said Philadelphia Streets Commissioner Clarlena Tolson. “I’ve been coming to this conference for well over a decade now, and my city is benefiting tremendously. I always leave with new creative ideas to either save money or improve efficiency. I look forward to more of the same next year.”

The 2013 MWMA Fall Summit will be held October 14-16 in Tampa. Registration will open in May 2013.

MWMA, the environmental affiliate of The United States Conference of Mayors, is a national membership association, representing solid waste directors, environmental commissioners, and other municipal solid waste decision makers from major cities, counties, and other local and regional public authorities and agencies across the country.

For a full list of the sessions at the 2012 MWMA Fall Summit, as well as PDF copies of presentations from the sessions, visit Virtual Conference Center at http://www.usmayors.org/mwma/fallsummit2.

The Municipal Waste Management Association would like to expression its sincere appreciation for the support and partnership of the following companies, without whom the 2012 Fall Summit would not have been possible.

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* These companies are also members of MWMA’s Solid Waste Advisory Council (SWAC). SWAC represents the corporate side of the solid waste industry – members include waste management, recycling, and waste-to-energy companies, as well as companies that manufacture and distribute the products and services that public sector solid waste officials rely on to carry out their work. Working together, MWMA and SWAC identify challenges facing cities and develop new and innovative approaches to environmental concerns. For more information on becoming a member of SWAC, contact Jubi Headley at 202-861-6798 by telephone, or send e-mail to jheadley@usmayors.org.
The Mayors’ Institute on City Design (MICD) returned to Charleston September 12-14 for its 54th National Session. Hosted by Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. and the city, the event was attended by Kansas City (MO) Mayor Sly James, New Bedford (MA) Mayor Jon Mitchell, Greensboro (NC) Mayor Robbie Perkins, Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero, Hartford Mayor Pedro E. Segarra, Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, Columbus (GA) Mayor Teresa Tomlinson, and Irving (TX) Mayor Beth Van Duyne.

Experts in architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, real estate, transportation, urban design, and sustainability joined the mayors in the two-and-a-half-day discussions and offered pragmatic advice on how the mayors could approach the urban design challenges facing each of their cities. The 54th National Session began with a tour of Downtown Charleston led by Charleston Civic Design Center Director Michael Maher. The tour showcased major downtown sites that have been instrumental to Charleston’s transformation as a destination city, including King Street, the waterfront park, and the historic preservation efforts of many of the city’s residences. Later that evening, a reception and dinner were held at City Gallery, which prominently features Charleston’s waterfront revitalization.

Riley presented on the role of design in Charleston’s transformation after remarks were made by the National Endowment for the Arts Design Director Jason Schupbach, Mayors’ Institute on City Design Director Trinity Simons, Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, and American Architectural Foundation President and CEO Ronald Bogle, Hon. AIA.

James began MICD discussions the following morning, presenting on Kansas City’s on-going efforts to improve the 18th and Vine Historic District. The city is looking for additional ways to attract visitors and residents to the area beyond the existing American Jazz Museum, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, the Gem Theater, and the Black Archives. To address this, the resource team offered suggestions on how to increase neighborhood retail amenities and better connect the district to downtown along 18th Street.

Van Duyne followed with a discussion of the Las Colinas Urban Center, a major employment district within the region. Irving is looking to create an updated vision for the area that includes a greater density of retail, housing, office, and recreational opportunities. The resource team encouraged the mayor to create a strong identity for the urban center and compliment the vision through programming, marketing, and branding of the area.

Mitchell presented on New Bedford’s efforts to redevelop State Pier, an eight-acre industrial site along the waterfront. The city hopes to take advantage of the reconstruction of Route 18 into a multi-modal boulevard to better connect the site with the downtown. The resource team offered various short and long-term design strategies to activate the site and attract tourists and locals to the waterfront.

Stanton concluded Thursday’s discussions with a presentation on Phoenix’s vacant lot activation strategy. The city hopes to showcase various temporary vacant lot revitalization techniques on a prominent site in the midtown area in hopes of inspiring positive change throughout the city. The resource team offered several suggestions of uses on the site and encouraged the mayor to continue engaging adjacent stakeholders.

Rogero initiated discussions on the final day of the MICD by presenting on her efforts to strengthen connections to the Old City District. The district has many historical assets but remains disconnected from the rest of Knoxville by extensive highway infrastructure. As such, the resource team focused on how to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation and connectivity throughout the district.

Segarra followed with a presentation on Albany Avenue, a local arterial corridor within Hartford. The city hopes to take advantage of future sewer separation and streetscaping projects to reimagine the corridor. The resource team offered suggestions on how to maximize and focus these investments along Albany Avenue to improve connectivity and the multi-modal experience.

Tomlinson presented on Columbus’ efforts to revitalize historic mill neighborhoods along the Chattahoochee River. The river is poised to become the longest urban whitewater course in the world, and with this conversion, the city hopes to improve adjacent neighborhoods. The resource team offered guidance on strengthening major corridors within the neighborhoods to provide better connections to the river.

Perkins concluded the meeting by presenting on Greensboro’s efforts to create a performing arts center and encompassing cultural district in the downtown. The mayor focused his presentation on the importance of locating the potential performing arts center adjacent to existing cultural assets downtown. The resource team encouraged the Mayor to continue with this idea, ensuring that he engage stakeholders in the design process.

Joining the mayors at this MICD National Session was a distinguished group of resource team members: Rodri go Abel, PLA, ASLA, LEED AP BD+C, Principal at Gustafson Guthrie Nichol; Stephen T. Ayers, FAIA, LEED AP, Architect of the Capitol; Barbara Brown Wilson, PhD, Director of the Center for Sustainable Design at the University of Texas; Ellen Dunham-Jones, AIA, Professor of Architecture and Urban Design at the Georgia Tech School of Architecture; Timothy Griffin, AIA, Director of Urban Design at the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation; Paul Okamoto, LEED AP, Partner at Okamoto Saijo Architecture; Catherine Sloss Crenshaw, President and CEO of Sloss Real Estate Company; and Jennifer Toole, AICP, ASLA, President of Toole Design Group.

MICD is a National Endowment for the Arts leadership initiative in partnership with the American Architectural Foundation and The United States Conference of Mayors. The 54th National Session was sponsored in part by United Technologies Corporation. Since 1986, MICD has helped transform communities through design by preparing mayors to be the chief urban designers of their cities. MICD conducts several sessions each year. For a list of upcoming events, past attendees, or for more information, visit the website www.micd.org.
CDBG Increased in FY2013 Continuing Resolution to $3.248 Billion

By Eugene T. Lowe

When Congress adopted the FY2013 Continuing Resolution CR on September 22, it also increased the Community Block Grant (CDBG) program from its current funding level of $2.948 billion to $3.248 billion. During negotiations between the Senate and House Conference on FY2012 appropriations last year, it was decided to take $300 million out of the Community Development Fund for disaster assistance, thus leaving the funding level for the CDBG formula grants program at $2.948 billion. In the FY2013 CR, Congress did not take any funds out of the Community Development Fund for disaster assistance and allowed the $300 million to be allotted to CDBG formula grants. (CDBG formula grants are funded within the Community Development Fund).

The Conference of Mayors in a September 11 letter to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and representatives of other national organizations of local elected officials, including the Conference of Mayors, housing and community professionals and representatives of other national organizations, sent a letter on August 17 to both House and Senate appropriators requesting that the FY2013 CR approve an amount for the Community Development Fund “...no less than the $3.3 billion appropriated in FY2012. However, within that $3.3 billion, we strongly urge you to resist any effort to divert a portion of that fund for disaster assistance.” The letter said further: “ in FY2012, $300 million from the Fund was used to provide assistance to states and communities ravaged by flooding and other natural disasters. This was unprecedented, as disaster assistance was historically included in supplemental appropriations bills.” The letter emphasized: “Until FY2012, disaster assistance had been properly funded from separate accounts reserved for that purpose. We respectfully urge you to utilize that precedent, if needed, in the FY2013 CR thereby allowing CDBG formula grants to be funded at $3.3 billion.”

The CR will fund CDBG and other government activities and functions through March 27, 2013.

Revised DATA Act Bill Still Needs Work to Minimize Unnecessary Burdens, Costs on Local Government

By Larry Jones

Senators Mark Warner (VA) and Rob Portman (OH) on September 21 introduced a revised version of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA) of 2012. The purpose of the legislation is to improve transparency in federal spending, and streamline federal reporting requirements. The original version of the bill (S. 1222) was introduced in June 2011. The new version differs in a number of ways from the House companion bill, H.R. 2147, which was approved by the House last April.

One of the key differences is the House bill would require all federal grantees, contractors, and loan recipients to report to a central database on their receipt and expenditure of federal funds. The new Senate version would eliminate the recipient reporting requirement and require the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to review agency-specific reporting requirements and propose a way to streamline them. The Conference of Mayors in a September 11 letter to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee expressed concerns that these new reporting requirements would impose costly burdens on local governments.

To enhance transparency, the new Senate version takes a different approach from the House bill. Instead of combining the four existing federal spending transparency websites (Recovery.gov, USASpending.gov, the catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance, and the Consolidated Federal Funds Report) into a single portal, the new Senate version would use one of the existing portals, USASpending.gov. This portal would be modified by adding data to meet the new reporting requirements. Furthermore, it would dramatically expand the data offering available on the website. USASpending.gov would be required to file reports for each agency, each agency component, each program, and each object class. Reports would be made on the dollar amounts available, obligated, spent, and transferred.

Like the House version, the revised Senate bill calls for government-wide data standards for reporting. But unlike the House version, the new Senate version requires the Treasury Department to establish these standards after consulting with OMB, the General Service Administration and the heads of federal agencies. The House bill would require a new (Federal Accountability and Spending Transparency) Commission to designate common data elements for federal spending information.

The Conference of Mayors made a number of recommendations to improve the Senate version of the DATA Act including: adding a funding provision to help grant recipients implement the new requirements; providing a reasonable phased-in period or a 12-month time frame for recipients to fully comply with the new requirements; minimizing and not placing new burdens on recipients; consolidate and standardize reporting requirements and set realistic deadlines for meeting those requirements; and conduct a cost benefit analysis to ensure that the reporting requirements promote openness and transparency. Some of the recommendations were embraced in the new Senate version and Conference staff will continue to work to get the others adopted.

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Special Interests: Environment, Resource Recovery, Waste Disposal

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Calendar of Events
(Updated 09/25/12)

2012

October 4-5
Mayors Water Summit, Washington, DC. Contact: Rich Anderson (202-861-6795)

2013

January 17-19

June 21-24
81st Annual Conference of Mayors, Las Vegas. Contact: Carol Edwards (202-293-7330). Registration Available February 2013

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Ortis to Serve at Florida League of Mayors

Pembroke Pines Mayor Frank Ortis has been elected to serve as the next President of the Florida League of Mayors for the 2012-2013 term. Ortis has said that he plans on holding roundtable discussions with the 410 Florida mayors throughout the year. Ortis is a member of the Conference of Mayors Advisory Board, and Chair of the Conference of Mayors Jobs, Education and Workforce Committee.

Arlington Heights Mayor Mulder Won't Seek Re-election

Arlington Heights (IL) Mayor Arlene J. Mulder has announced that she will not be seeking another term in office. The next election for Arlington Heights mayor will take place in April 2013.

Mulder has been an active leader within The U.S. Conference of Mayors, serving as a Trustee and as Vice Chair of the Criminal and Social Justice Committee.

In commenting on this announcement, Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran said, “Mayor Mulder has given her time and energy to our organization, and through her active engagement, The U.S. Conference of Mayors became an even stronger organization.”

Mulder has spent 34 years in public service as a park district commissioner, village trustee and mayor. Before entering public service, Mulder was a teacher and a coach.

In press reports, Mulder stated, “My decision is based on the fact that I have continually apologized to my family that I can’t be at a family event…I’ve loved everything I’ve done, loved every minute, and I plan to work as hard as ever these last seven months.”

Taveras Announces WaterFire Rome

Providence Mayor Angel Taveras announced on September 13 that WaterFire, Providence’s signature event, will expand to Rome, Italy with an inaugural lighting of 30 braziers on the Eternal City’s historic Tiber River.

This is the first large-scale lighting of WaterFire in Europe. At the invitation of Rome Mayor Gianni Alemanno, Taveras traveled to Rome for the inaugural lighting of WaterFire Rome. Italian Consul General Giuseppe Pastorelli who recently lit a WaterFire in Providence, joined the mayor for the press conference.

“WaterFire has established Providence as a global city. Greater Travel has ranked WaterFire, along with Paris at nightfall, among its greatest destinations after dark in the world,” said Taveras. “I am excited to bring our signature event to a global and historic city like Rome and look forward to sharing our comeback story with our friends in Italy’s capital city.”

WaterFire Rome was staged with the help of volunteers from Rome and Providence, including students attending the Rhode Island School of Design’s Rome program. The WaterFire lightings September 21 and September 22 included an iteration of Robert Hammonds Chance Encounters installation and a dance installation by Linda Foster.

WaterFire has been recognized, alongside Paris at nightfall and the night markets of Taiwan, as one of the world’s greatest destinations after dark. More than 15 million people have attended a Providence WaterFire and the showcase was recently one of only 47 organizations across the country to receive an ArtPlace Creative Placemaking grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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